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# NOTES FROM THE MEDICAL PRESS

IN CHARGE OF

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DIET IN DISEASE.—The *Journal of the American Medical Association* says:

“Proper digestion depends on the ability of the gastric juice and the intestinal secretions to transform starches, sugar, fats, albuminoids, etc., into an assimilable state. The proteid substances are chiefly acted on by the gastric juice and converted into peptones. The bile and pancreatic juice favor the emulsification of the fats, while the starches are acted on by the intestinal fluids and are changed into maltose and glucose. In disease the normal gastro-intestinal secretions are so disturbed as to require due diligence on the part of the practitioner in prescribing that form of diet which will be most easily digested and rendered assimilable. Suggestions, then, as to the preparation of food for the sick-room are not of lesser importance, but, on the other hand, care in dietetics is, in association with the close observation of elimination by the skin, kidneys, and bowels, the key-note to success in therapeutics. The following methods may be employed in the preparation of the different foods:

“*Barley-Water*.—This may be made by grinding one tablespoonful of pearl barley in an ordinary coffee-mill; add one-half pint of water and boil for fifteen or twenty minutes and strain the liquid off and add salt. This preparation is recommended by Thompson in preference to oatmeal-water whenever the bowels are loose. The latter prepared similarly is preferred when constipation is present. Ringer recommends the following formula for barley-water: To a tablespoonful of pearl barley washed in cold water add two or three lumps of sugar, the rind of one lemon, and the juice of half a lemon. On these pour a quart of boiling water and allow the mixture to stand for six or seven hours and then strain. The barley-water not used at one feeding should not be used later. Half an ounce of isinglass may be boiled in the water if desired.

“*Rice-Water*.—This may be prepared by adding one heaping tablespoonful to one quart of water and boiling it down to one pint. Rice itself contains practically no fat nor proteid substance. It is said by Davis that two and one-half ounces of boiled rice are disposed of by the stomach in three and a half hours and are absorbed very completely by the intestine. Rice is most easily assimilated when the grains are swollen and softened; this is best accomplished by steaming. The digestibility of boiled rice is said to be improved by adding a little butter, which coats the kernels and prevents their forming a pasty mass.

“*Arrowroot-Water*.—This may be prepared by adding one teaspoonful of the arrowroot-flour to one pint of water and boiling for five or ten minutes. Arrowroot, when cooked, is more digestible than any other starch. It may be used in making gruel, and when prepared in the form of a jelly it is said to keep longer than any other form of starchy foods. It is of service in the severer forms of gastritis where the irritability of the mucous membrane of the stomach is so great that other articles of diet cannot be borne.

“*Almond Bread*.—Hare recommends the use of almond bread as an article

of diet in diabetes. It may be prepared by taking one-quarter of a pound of blanched sweet almonds and beating them as fine as possible in a stone mortar; remove the sugar contained in this meal by putting it in a linen bag and steeping it for a quarter of an hour in boiling water acidulated with vinegar; mix this paste thoroughly with three ounces of butter and two eggs. Add the yolks of three eggs and a little salt and stir well; whip up the whites of three eggs and stir in. Place the dough in moulds and dry by a slow fire.

*"Beef Preparations.*—Meat may be prepared for the sick-room in either the solid or liquid form. Meat powders of various descriptions are on the market and are of use when it becomes necessary to administer food in a concentrated form.

"Scraped beef is not infrequently prescribed by the physician in certain disorders of digestion. When finely divided it is easily digested, for by so preparing with a dull knife the indigestible connective-tissue sheaths are eliminated and the pulp remains, which may further be prepared by running through a sieve. This preparation is of great value as an article of diet in dilatation of the stomach, gastritis, and other diseases. It may be taken in the form of a sandwich, spread on bread. Meat can be easily powdered by drying boiled beef over a water-bath and powdering it.

"Mosquera's beef-meal is a powdered meat prepared by digesting tender, lean beef with the juice of the pineapple and dried. By this means the muscle fibre is partly converted into peptones. It is an odorless and a tasteless preparation containing at least eighty per cent. of nutrient. It can be prepared by simply mixing it with water or warm milk or in cocoa. Like scraped beef, it is a valuable article of diet in the different forms of gastric troubles, such as gastritis, ulcer, and carcinoma, or in any disease where the digesting power of the stomach is greatly diminished.

"Somatose is another preparation which contains about the same per cent. of nutritive substance. It has but little odor or taste and is taken without much hesitation by patients. It may be given in the powder form spread on bread, about one teaspoonful at a time, or, better, in the liquid form mixed with plain warm water, milk, soup, or cocoa.

"Beef-juice is prepared by taking a thick, tender piece of steak and broiling it over a quick fire so as to coagulate the outside only. The juice is then extracted by cutting the steak into small pieces and squeezing them in an ordinary lemon-squeezer or a press especially constructed for that purpose. One or two tablespoonfuls of the juice can then be properly diluted and seasoned to suit the individual case. This preparation is of service in the conditions mentioned above, in the different infectious diseases, and in the feeding of infants after they have reached one or two years of age.

"Beef tea is prepared by taking one pound of lean beef, mincing it, and putting it, with its juice, into an earthen vessel containing about a pint of tepid water; let it stand for one hour and then strain, squeezing out all the juice. Place on the fire and raise slowly to the boiling-point, stirring it briskly all the time.

*"Eggs.*—Raw eggs, according to Dr. N. S. Davis, may be given directly from the shell, or seasoned with pepper or salt, or added to bouillon, coffee, or milk. A very palatable preparation is made by shaking an egg thoroughly with lemon-juice and sugar, and diluting the mixture with either plain or carbonized water. A very nutritious mixture can be made by shaking an egg with milk and flavoring the mixture with nutmeg or cinnamon.

"Eggnog is best made by adding the yolk of an egg, well beaten, to a glass of milk to which a tablespoonful of sherry wine or whiskey has been added. Sugar and the white of the egg should be beaten together and added by stirring. Sometimes the addition of a tablespoonful of lime-water is of service in aiding its digestibility. Raw eggs, according to Thompson in his 'Practical Dietetics,' are often prescribed when a nutritious, highly concentrated diet is desired, and in cases of tuberculosis, some forms of anæmia, and in the various wasting diseases. Sometimes from eight to ten or twelve eggs are given daily if they can be digested.

"In forced feeding of melancholia or tuberculosis and non-febrile cases eggs are very nutritious, prescribed in the form of eggnog. In the fevers, however, according to the author, eggs are liable to produce nausea and perhaps vomiting; for this reason whole eggs are unfit for fever patients, and the whites alone should be used, prepared in the form of an eggnog.

"*Gelatin*.—Gelatin can be used in the form of coffee jelly prepared after the formula of the United States Army hospitals as given by Thompson: Soak one-half an ounce of gelatin in one-fourth cup of cold water for half an hour; pour on one cup of boiling water, then add one-half cup of strong coffee and two tablespoonfuls of sugar. Strain it through a cloth into a dish, in which it may be cooled in a pan of ice-water or in a refrigerator. A wine jelly can be similarly prepared by adding one-half cup of sherry wine and a small piece of cinnamon to flavor."

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NUTRITIVE INFUSIONS.—Southgate Leigh, in the New York *Medical Journal*, describes a plan of his own devising for injecting nutriment into the circulation. To be injected under the skin, the food must be sterile, nutritious, easily absorbed, and liquefied, easily obtained, and readily prepared. These requirements are fulfilled by a saline solution of white of egg. An infusion apparatus is used consisting of a glass funnel with rubber tubing attached, a large aspirating-needle, and the salt is supplied by saline tablets.

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TREATMENT OF PULMONARY TUBERCULOSIS.—The Philadelphia *Medical Journal* has a paper on this subject by William A. Caldwell. He says before beginning treatment it is well to remember (1) that tuberculosis is a preventable disease—by destruction of the excretions known to contain the bacilli, and by keeping the organs and tissues of the body at their highest physiological function; (2) that it is a curable disease, as is shown by the reports of many sanatoria in every part of the world and by post-mortem statistics; (3) that there is no specific climate, although some climates have greater healing influences, and that it may be successfully treated in all climates; (4) that there is no specific medicine, only medicine that favorably influences the disease; (5) that to obtain the best results an early diagnosis is necessary. The principles of treatment are: (1) the patient should live continuously in the open air; (2) his nutrition should be maintained by all available means at the highest point; (3) he should have rest suited to his condition and he stage of the disease; (4) all means consistent with his condition should be used to harden the tissues and render them impervious to the invasion of the tubercle bacillus.